Chapter 5 – Notes on the Methodology

The purpose of our Needs Assessment Survey is two-fold. First, we needed a group of organizations in need of capacity building assistance who wanted to take part in our project. The survey served as an "application" to inquire about our services and give us an idea of their organizational capacity so we could best choose how to assist each organization. The second purpose was to give us an idea of the most common challenges facing Hoosier nonprofits so that we could begin preparing ourselves so our support could be as effective as possible. These dual purposes affected the content of the survey and how it was advertised.

The questionnaire focuses on general topics related to nonprofit management, and each category contains up to ten questions which focused on either minimum necessary requirements for an organization's operations or a significant achievement of capacity. A majority of the questions are formatted similarly to the Likert scale with respondents given a statement and asked to respond from the following choices: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree; Don't Know/Not Applicable. The questions in each category were coded on a score of 0-5, with a higher score reflecting a higher capacity, which gave the opportunity to get mean average scores for each question and category. These scores are what are referred to in the later sections as Categorical Scores, and were used to create rankings from most challenging and to least challenging areas of capacity. The categories are as follows:

Demographic/ Contact Info	Organizational Assessment	Operations and Governance	Planning and Programming	Marketing
Networking and Advocacy	Information Technology	Human Resources	Financial Resources	Capacity Building Support

One question on the survey asked participants to rank the eight significant categories (all except Demographic/Contact Info and Capacity Building Support) in order from most challenging to least challenging, which also gave the opportunity to determine mean averages of the rank that participants

gave each area of capacity. These Self-Reported Rankings were compared to the Categorical Rankings as discussed above.

Based on the Categorical Score, we were able to infer levels of organizational capacity. There is a total of 176 possible points from the coded questions, and we determine 3 levels of capacity based on the raw scores: high capacity organizations score between 133-176 points; middle level capacity is a range of 89-132; low capacity organizations have between 44-88 points. This range was determined based on both the highest and lowest scores possible and then by dividing that range into three equal parts. While we are aware that there are countless other considerations when it comes to making an accurate judgment of organizational capacity, we feel that this simplistic quantitative measure suits our purpose in understanding the current operations of these organizations with whom we will be working.

We advertised the survey and our capacity building services through a variety of ways. Personal emails were sent to contacts of the various networks within OFBCI. It was also advertised through the office's weekly Friday Night Facts publication. Please refer to Appendices B and C for the FNF flyer and the invitation to take the survey sent through e-mail.

*(A full discussion of the survey's development and distribution can be found in **Appendix E**)*